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ABSTRACT

The "needs basis" for obtaining funding for research and training grants from foundations is examined, and a model for developing research and training grants is proposed. The most important task is proving that there is an unmet need for the grant. The grant proposal should describe the unmet need, what is being done about the problem, and whether the need and the problem can be researched. The need of the college or university as related to research and training grant should address what is already being offered and whether there is an overlapping or duplication of effort. When there is a Grants Office, it is essential that individual efforts be made known to insure that not more than one similar proposal is directed to the same foundation. If the program is designed as training, there needs to be a description of who is to be trained the justification of training that group. The need of the foundations or grant giver is usually stated in source books. It is important to know what grants have been made by the foundation, the recipients, and the amount. Contact with recipients of grants that are similar to one's proposed program is advisable. (SW)

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THE NEEDS BASIS FOR DEVELOPMENT OF FUNDING PROPOSALS FOR RESEARCH AND TRAINING GRANTS

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THE NEEDS BASIS FOR DEVELOPMENT OF FUNDING PROPOSALS OF A RESEARCH AND TRAINING NATURE

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The "needs basis" for getting funding for research and training grants from foundations has several layers of operation. The first, which I would try to avoid, is the idea that the foundations need to give the money. This line of needs investigation leads to looking at foundations which have explicitly stated, or let it out over the grapevine, that they are currently interested in certain types of programs. Foundations do have stated interests but, they don't have to give. Foundations need well researched and well written grant requests. This is their greatest need. We can supply this need.

Obviously, it takes just as long to write a grant request for $5,000 as it does for $500,000. People are often tempted to go for the big money and ignore the smaller amounts. The way foundations work varies greatly, but usually they have procedures for looking at large and small grants. Some foundations look at large grants one month and small grants the next month. Research and training grants are usually in the small grant category.

The needs base for writing grant proposals I am most familiar with and with which I have had the most success is

that of proving the need and designing a plan to meet the need. If a debater can win the need argument, they have won the debate already. The problem with both debaters and grant writers is the attractiveness of developing a plan rather than proving the need.

The need must be of such importance that it takes priority over subsidiary needs. The need must be made specific (using the best of Toulmin's format of Data/Warrant /Claim in it's most sophisticated form) and the emphasis must be on the data. The need must be based on in-depth analysis, statistical proof, sound use of authoritative evidence, and as much graphic support as possible.

The stance of the debater in dealing with the need issue is based on an acute awareness that the "counterattack" will be based on the idea; that other needs are more important, that the "dynamic status quo" is already taking care of the needs, and that there are other ways to meet the need than what is being proposed. So, in writing a grant proposal, it is a good idea to not get so hooked on just one need, that you can't see the other related needs. You can't afford to overlook the various other need ideas that may come from foundation contacts. In fact, it is good strategy to pursue all the relevant needs arguments to the extent you almost have a completed proposal (based on these needs) just in case the foundation people, if you get to them, are more interested in a program that deals with these subsidiary needs.

After the primary need is established, the need for the research and training proposal must be matched up with the parameters and perimeters established by the foundation. The grants office of your school can be of great help in providing lists of "available foundations". People closest to the problem areas, who are most aware of the needs, can write better grant requests than those who are more isolated from the real needs research and training.

Research and Training

Research and training go together in this manner: the research is based on the need that the people in situations have for improvement in some specific area and research includes what is being done as well as what is not, but should be, done. Research and training is related to the university in the traditional sense that a university has a natural concern for social improvement and that colleges or universities are the best institutionalized method of helping "society". They are research sources and training institutions for society. A university should be unbiased and not governmentally controlled. The colleges or universities are also places where training of people who will be dealing with the programs can best be done. Therefore, the function of a college or university is to be

a "trainer of trainers", the place where problems and needs are studied, solutions developed, and what people are taught to teach others to help meet the needs of society.

The people employed in the university, as well as the students, are people with special callings to help better the world. They have been given specialized training in various areas that make them aware of current problems. Also, due to their research orientation, they have a "prophetic consciousness" to work to make this world a better place for all.

Once a specific need has been discovered, tested, and proven as a most important need, within the area of that general need, it is the duty of scholars and students, working as colleagues, to come up with programs to meet the needs. Usually, this involves a training of trainers program.

Foundations and Institutions

Most foundations and institutions are interested in research programs that lead into some practical meeting of needs and programs that can become self-sustaining. This is the reason for emphasis on "training of trainers", or TOT approaches. If the university is already doing what should be done, there is no need for the grant request. Then the

question is: how can the present program be improved upon and extended beyond the current boundaries of the campus.

The problem of colleges and universities is that they turn out products rather than the meet the needs of society. Foundations are more concerned with seeing that most pressing and important needs of society are being met.

If an educational institution is tied up solely with their specific vision or goal that they will not consider any ideas or efforts other than what they have imposed on the institution , there are difficulties in trying to get grant moneys. Furthermore, some schools want unencumbered funds that can be used at the discretion of the administration. The paradox is; the institution provides the faculty, who bring in grant money, yet the institution wants to control the money.

The "Grants Game"

"Getting Grants" is a game. You've have to understand it is a high risk win/lose game and the odds are with those who try and lose. People who are willing to play the game usually talk about the grants they have received and sort of ignore the ones that they wrote up and lost. But if you enjoy the life of the mind and academic games, you find yourself involved in grants before you realize what is

happening. Since going after grants is a game there are rules and regulations and you can't play the game unless you know these parameters and perimeters. A parameter is a variable within a domain and a perimeter is the boundary of the domain or the playing field. It is the foundation or granting agency which sets the domain or establishes the perimeters. They are bound by law to only give funding to specific projects and thus they have well established boundaries. However, within those boundaries there are parameters; factors with arbitrary value that can be built into units and these are the things we work with in playing the game.

Fly Fishing and the Grants Game

Let me compare the grant getting game to my favorite sport- fly fishing. We begin with the domain, the stream itself. You have the necessary equipment and, if possible, you "match the hatch" or try to find a fly that duplicates (in the eyes of the trout) what the trout seems to be feeding on at that time. You watch for "rises" and try to think like a trout and visualize where the fish might be. A lot of preparation goes into fly fishing. You spend time finding the place where you can make that perfect cast without muddying up the water. You avoid letting your shadow fall on the stream. You get the right size leader and line and tie on the fly. You make several practice casts before you shoot that line out so the fly hits the water first and

lands just above the feeding path of the trout. (I have done this only twice in my life- getting the the fly to land first, I mean.) Then you wait until you get that little strike and with great finesse you sink the hook and begin to play the fish.

Hooking the fish is only the midpoint of the game. Now you have to reel it in, and you are fighting the stream, unseen snags, size of the fish, and other people fishing the same stream. You have to know when to give the fish line, when to pull in, and how to keep a taut line all the time. Even when you see that trout and you get excited, since the next step is to get it in the net, you have to be most careful. When you finally have the fish netted and safely on shore, or to be more secure, when you have it mounted (or have a photostat of the check from the granting agency on the wall) is the "getting" game over. But this is really just the start of a new game called "running the grant".

How To Do It Books

There are hundreds of books on fly fishing and dozens of books on how to get grants. After skimming through most of the ones on getting grants I have come to a tentative conclusion. Books on how to get grants are often seen to have been written by people who have not really gotten very

big or very good grants. Perhaps I fall under my own condemnation here. since I am about to tell you how I did it and how I will continue to do it.

At a SCA conference in Chicago one summer after I had gotten several good grants from Lilly Endowment, Inc. for research and training programs while I was at the University of Denver I made an interesting discovery. This was a meeting of people who had gotten grants and those who were interested in learning how to do it. When I made the statement that I took a debater's attitude toward doing research in writing proposals and concentrated on the need rather than on the plan I saw a lot of nods of affirmation. I asked how many people there had experience in debate, and found, by a show of hands, that most of the people who had been successful in getting grants had the common experience of being in debate as debaters or as coaches.

The general philosophy of debate still holds; concentrate on proving the need and let the plan grow out of the established need. Beginning debaters and grant seekers often come up with fantastic plans, but ignore the need.

The most important task you have is proving the need for what you are proposing. If there is no need- why bother with writing up a proposal?

To prove the need you begin with the "dynamic status quo" (a term dear to the affirmative who are called to defend it) and you examine what is being done now to meet the need. Very few basic needs in our society go unmet. You

don't develop a need where there isn't one- advertising people do this. You examine the need carefully and see if there is not an area in the general need that has not been fully developed. It may be that new technology in the field of communication makes some needs almost obsolete.

Naturally, you can examine the need and extend it from one group to another comparable group. You can get from various sources, listed in the bibliography, computer based listing of foundations that might be open to grant proposals based on what you are interested in doing. However, these computer based services are not very valuable. (For a good analysis see Norton Kiritz's article published by the Grantsmanship Center "Foundation Research Services: Can They Help You?").

Remember, the foundations are established to meet the financial needs of those who are seeking to improve society by development of proposals that lead into projects. The more you can prove to the foundation that the need is within the scope of their interests or domain, and the more the need is financial, the better it is for your proposal. Foundations are set up to meet financial needs of researchers who are developing specific grant proposals that fit into their areas of specialization.

There are people who disagree with me on this whole needs point. They look at the foundations and see what they are looking for and write proposals accordingly. I feel more of this is done at the federal level than when approaching

private foundations. At one time the "feds" tried to solve social problems by throwing money at them. There were certain key phrases and catch words that grant writers felt had a magic power and if these words were included you were sure to get the grants. I worked for three years as one of three people in our profession as a reader for the old HEW offices and was paid to read small grant proposals in communication. The most ridiculous proposal I read was from a person who wanted to improve classroom communication in the school system of the nation by taking films of proper communication conduct by some nicely groomed upper class white children and have the films shown to underprivileged, racial, and ethnically different children. The grant was designed to improve classroom conduct of targeted groups. The proposal missed by a mile.

So, in my opinion, the first rule is to find a real and pressing need that is not being met and concentrate on developing a series of proposals to deal with the need. Then, almost at the same time try to find foundations that might have a need for proposals that are within the domain of that particular need.

A third step, that is just part of my school teacher nature, is to develop a complete proposal,just as I would develop a debate case, to describe, define, delimit, and determine the need. Personally, I like to develop the complete proposal before I begin to figure the budgetary dimensions. I love to see it all in a rough draft form

before I write that first letter of inquiry. There is that myth of someone writing a one or two page letter and getting thousands of dollars. It is a myth, unless someone can dispel it by telling me of someone who actually did it. Usually there are weeks and months of preparation and work before that letter is written.

Now, if you hook them with that proposal letter- to go back to the fly fishing analogy- how you proceed is determined more by the foundation than by what you would like to do yourself. Play them carefully, keep the lines of communication taut- you have to be taught to be taut- and give a little line and reel in when you have slack and hopefully you will show a net gain and get a grant.

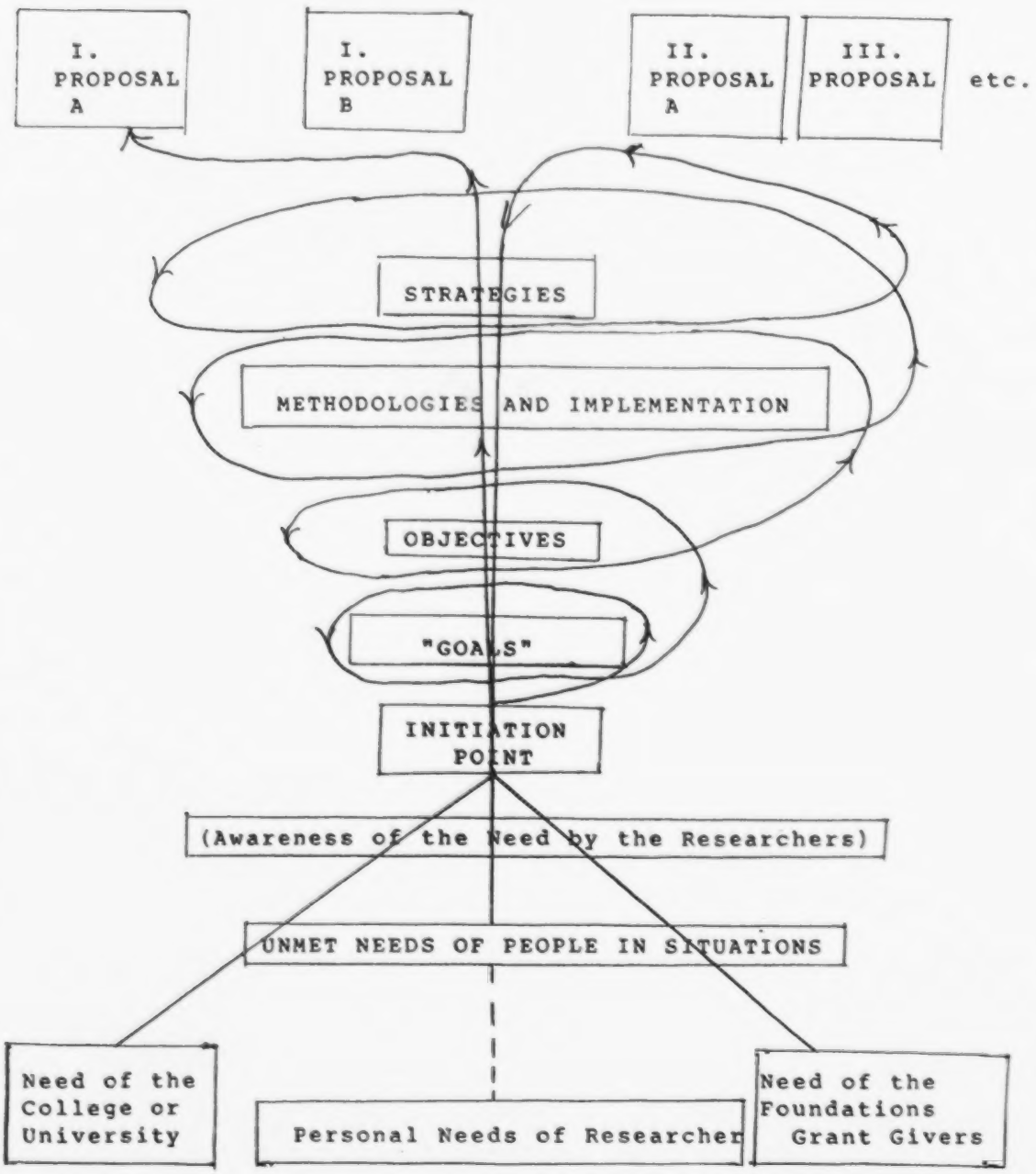
Theory and Model for Needs Basis for Developing Grants

The following model is a blueprint for talking about the development of research and training grants. The model is both medicaly and growth oriented and is based on the theory that the place to begin when working on grants is with the actual needs of people rather than trying to find what foundations want.

Whenever a theory is developed and a model made of that theory it is necessary to invoke Kaplan's law of the hammer; "Give a small boy a hammer and he will find that evereything

needs pounding." I admit to being a small boy and having a tendency to put too much in my models. So, I will present a one page outline of the complete model and discuss each section.

MODEL OF NEEDS BASIS FOR RESEARCH AND TRAINING GRANTS
(Developed by Paul Hunsinger, PhD CBN University)



LEGEND FOR MODEL

Beginning with the INITIATION POINT the basis is in the general AWARENESS OF THE NEED BY THE RESEARCHER which is based on the UNMET NEEDS OF PEOPLE IN SITUATIONS. Once the researcher becomes aware of the need, the next step is likely to be some incident that enables the person to focus more specifically on the problem. Immediately, questions arise; what is being done about the problem, how can the problem be defined and described, how urgent is the problem in relation to other problems, can the need and the problem be researched, and what kind of research is necessary to study and eventually prove the existence of the need to the people who should be concerned with it?

There is also the PERSONAL NEED OF THE RESEARCHER; the person who is interested in doing something about the unmet needs of the people. This personal need may be interpreted as a "calling" and may be of such intensity that the person can hardly do anything other than what they are "called" to do. It can also be just a passing interest or something that is subsidiary to other more important concerns. Usually people with a controlled need in which there is a personal drive and a certain research objectivity can be good initiators of grants.

The NEED OF THE COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY as related to research and training grant proposals must be looked at in terms of what is already being offered in the established program of the school. If there is an overlapping of the curricular- and often this is the area of the extended facilities of the university- the efforts of the grant seeker may be held back or even nullified.

When there is a Grants Office it is essential that individual efforts be made known to this office early since they can be of great help with venture funds, advice, and encouragement. When the proposal is developed enough that a search of foundations can be made, the grants office must be contacted to help in the search and to make sure there are no other grants being directed toward the same foundation. If there are several grants all being directed toward the same foundation, the grants office usually must decide on which proposal should be sent in and the basis is usually on how much is being asked for, with the idea that the larger budgeted program has precedence. However, when it is a different type of grant, such as the research and training grants being discussed in this paper, it is possible to show the unique nature of the grant and argue that a small grant may lead into creating a more receptive atmosphere for larger grants later on.

The NEED OF THE FOUNDATIONS OR GRANT GIVERS is usually precisely stated in the FOUNDATION DIRECTORY and in other standard sources. It is important to know what grants have

been made, the nature of the grants, how much they have been for, and to whom the grants have been given. Quite often contact with those who have gotten grants similar to what you are interested in is an essential next step.

Foundations usually have categories for grants and if there is a cut off point for small grants it is well to know what it is so you can budget accordingly. It is possible to get more specific information and guidelines of proposals by writing directly to the foundations and in some cases it is even possible to call the people in the foundation for information.

If a person has gotten grants from a foundation previous to the newly submitted proposal then this can be very helpful. People in foundations who know the "track record" of the grant seekers know what the person has already done and this can be an asset for the proposal writer.

The needs base of the individual, the institution, and the foundation should be coordinated and balanced, but the primary need is the UNMET NEED OF PEOPLE IN SITUATIONS and the importance and urgency of that need.

Starting with the INITIATION POINT and moving up in the model the "GOALS" are the general statements of the proposal being developed to meet the need. The difference between the "GOALS" and the "OBJECTIVES" is that the objectives are specific statements that can be a basis for measurable

research and training. The goal is more poetic and less precise than the statement of objectives.

METHODOLOGIES AND IMPLEMENTATION statements grow out of the research on the nature of the problem and the needs being addressed. In the OBJECTIVES the statements lead into what is in the METHODOLOGIES AND IMPLEMENTATION responses. Here is where the proposal gets specific and mention is made of what has been done and why the methods and means of training to be used are established as the most effective and efficient possible. In some instances old problems and needs can be met by improved or new technology.

STRATEGIES includes the description of the whole procedure and what the research has revealed. If the program is designed as a training or a training of trainers program there must be a description of who is to be trained and the justification of training these people. If what is being proposed is a training of trainers program there should be statements of how these people will be trained and what they will be expected to do with the training. (Here is where the follow up program to what is being proposed is rooted.) The strategies can be expanded as the helix suggests. This is where adjustments can be made based on what has already been established.

THE LINE GOING DOWN FROM THE HELIX is to suggest a complete review and reexamination of the whole before the proposal is sent to a foundation. In the process of grant

writing, because of the complexity, there is a need for constant review to bring the whole together.

THE LINE MOVING UP TO I. PROPOSAL A. indicates this is the first foundation being approached and I. PROPOSAL B. is a modification of PROPOSAL A., but made to the same foundation.II. PROPOSAL is to a different proposal as is III. PROPOSAL.

If a foundation gives a direct refusal, usually in a form letter, you take it and move to another. However, often there is correspondence or phone calls that give you some idea of what they liked and did not like about your proposal and if you are given any encouragement to make some modification and resubmit your proposal- DO IT. Most proposals call for modification and this may be done in a visit (at their request) in their offices.

The MODEL OF NEEDS BASIS FOR RESEARCH AND TRAINING GRANTS is not only an outline, but a blueprint to find where there may be problems.

I feel what Plato wrote, "From virtue comes money and every other good as well" is quite true. The Greek word for virtue meant the "ability to do, to work, or to be." In other words, from what you can demonstrate you can do (your "virtue") comesmoney from the foundation and every other good as well.

In closing, a story. There were two nephews who had in common many uncles. The one nephew went to the uncles who had the most money and asked for as much as he thought he

could get. The other one found needs that the family had and asked the uncles with the greatest concerns for money to meet the needs. Which of the two did better? Both. The moral of the story is not following just a "needs" base or any other, but ask or you'll probably not get anything and also get to know your uncles. Even the one named Sam.

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